

## "WE ARE IN SOCIETY"

SOCIAL LEADERS REHEARSING PHELPS BROWN'S COMEDY—BENEFIT TO BE GIVEN FOR THE JUNIOR REPUBLIC.

It has been a strenuous time for the young people of society who, for the sake of charity, have determined to become actresses for the nonce. But the trouble is about over now, and as a result of the hard work the ladies and gentlemen have been doing for a month or more Mr. Phelps Brown's musical comedy, "We Are in Society," will be presented at the Belasco Theater to-morrow night with something of the verve, dash, and air of a professional performance.

The work of preparation has almost broken the heart of Mr. Percy F. Leach, the professional stage manager. At first it was hoped that the local talent would be amply sufficient to prepare Mr. Brown's clever comedy for the stage, but when it came to guessing which was the O. P. side of the stage, to knowing the difference between "tormentors" and "borders," or "bunch lights" and "stage braces," the young people found themselves at sea, and so Mr. Leach, who managed a stock company in Washington last season, was called in to help.

His task has not been a sinecure by any means. "Hang it all!" he says, "they won't come, and I can't make 'em." The stage manager dealing with real stage folk has a powerful remedy which he may apply to enforce his rules. But Mr. Leach cannot dismiss his debutante actresses; to give them two weeks' notice would only be a joke, and as they don't get



Miss Fredericka Morgan.

ly. "Oh, good evening, Mrs. Noyes; so glad you're here. Yes, the others will be in in just a moment. I hope there won't be any other defaulters. Mr. Leach, but I did see Mrs. Mitchell—that is she passed me in her brougham—she may be coming—but she certainly looked—oh, well, let us hope for the best."

And at last, in spite of all the counter-attractions, most of the people arrive. There is Dr. Alfred Hopkins, who plays the part of Senator Parsons-Packington; Mr. Le Roy Gough, who plays Jack Henneberry; Phelps Brown, the author, who wrote the part of Count Sans Argent for himself; Mr. George O'Connor, who was cast for Snow the butler, but who, having an aversion to blacking his face, had it changed to the part of Clay Calhoun. Then there is Mrs. Piquette Mitchell, who is to play Mrs. Parsons-Packington, and Mrs. James Mitchell, who will transform herself into Miss Whitley Playaway; Miss Olga Converse, who will be Miss Peppia Perron; Mrs. James Moore, who is set down for Mrs. Bullingham; Miss Edith Spafford, who will be Mrs. Bearingham, and Mrs. T. C. Noyes, the "leading lady"—Miss Violette Parsons-Packington. The rest of the space in the ballroom is taken up by the ladies and gentlemen of the chorus who, like the real chorus people, usually drive up to rehearsals in their own carriages.

There is always a hum of chatter—there is so much to discuss, you know—but when once Mr. Leach gets things started he is a stern disciplinarian and the mere fact that one of his chorus ladies happens to be the daughter of an admiral, or another the daughter of a multimillionaire does not stop him from yelling: "Keep quiet, will you, over there in the corner. Give these people a chance to sing!" and usually the conversation ceases while the stage manager glares.

And yet, after all, it is a pretty tractable company, and it is astonishing what progress these amateurs have made under Mr. Leach's direction. There are dances as difficult as the famous love-dance in "Florodora," and songs whose full effect depends largely on the work of the chorus behind the principal singer.

The first song falls to the part of Mr.



Miss Stephanie Trescott.

Phelps Brown, whose French accent as he sings is inimitable: "So se French you mock, you have every frock imported from Paris. Your own champagne is mark, I see, To come from my country; Ah, if se Yankee himself could see, He laugh ha-ha-he-he—For to se Frenchman, don't you see, He is so ver' funny."

CHORUS.  
Ye Yankee, he is easy, just as easy as can be; He thinks he know a lot because he make so much money; But if he want to keep his coin, just take a tip from me; He better stay at home and keep away from gay Paris.

When the time comes for Violette to sing her first number with a big chorus behind her it is strange to note the hush and the cessation of conversation, for this song is a favorite with the company and it is sure to make a big hit on Monday night. Mrs. Noyes is a clever actress, and she sings this song with great vivacity and grace.

Between the first and second acts, instead of the usual intermission, there have prevailed upon Capt. Frank R. Wilcox, U. S. A., to doff his military rank and become a property man. He has ten assistants, who, with their sleeves rolled up, arrange the properties on the stage, just as in real life, the while Capt. Wilcox sings to the audience that—

When a scene in a play is a shipwreck at sea, 'tis then that the interest's intense; Our hero dived under a rock, 'tis then that my work is immense. I'm the roar of the thunder, the flash of the lightning, the howl of the wind and the rain; Though I work in the dark, I wish to remark, without me the show would be tame.

CHORUS.  
The property man am I, A hero behind the fly; Too modest to pose, don't you know; Contented to run the whole show. The property man am I, A hero behind the fly; Though Mansfield is due, Though he should be a shine, If not for the property man.

The second act is almost all vaudeville, a sort of burlesque on the "Friend-

ship Charity Fete." It opens with a song to the cause for which all this trouble and pains are being taken:

Here's to the Junior Republic; long may it live and thrive; Here's to the dear good Public, from whom its support we derive; And when we do our stunts for you We hope you will not say 'tis true That Charity and Robbery are twined-dum and twined-dee. That Charity and Robbery, &c.

One of the most difficult things to rehearse has been the roller-skating stunt, in which a large portion of the chorus skates in on the stage early. Of course, everybody can skate, but it is not easy to skate musically—to keep in time and motion with the music of "The Roller Rink for Mine."

When I ask my charming Kate where she'd like to go, To the rink or to the track, or to a variety show, My question always seems to meet one reply: "There's just one place that you and I will now go. If you want to make yourself solid with this girl, Just take me to the roller rink; we'll have a merry whirl."

CHORUS.  
The roller rink for mine, That's the place for a time; No auto or airship can compare With the poetry of motion we find there. The band begins to play, Every care is driven away; And so I say, both night and day, The roller rink for mine.

Of course, it is all hard work, and Mr. Leach keeps them at it. Over and over again they have to do some of the numbers, until they are perfect. The principals think that everything is fine, and the chorus is so tired that some of them would beg off if they were not so game, but often it has been past midnight before Stage Manager Leach is satisfied, and, picking up his unfinished cigar, nods curiously and says: "Good-night, ladies and gentlemen."

It is with a sigh of relief that they see him go. He reaches the door, turns around, and says: "Oh, we might as well work to-morrow. All meet here at 2 o'clock to-morrow evening." But it is only by such work as this that the performance has taken shape at all, and the result of it all is that to-morrow night Washington will have a chance to see one of the best amateur performances of a clever musical comedy ever given in the city.

### FRANCIS WILSON ON ACTING.

Comedian Delivers an Address on Ideals in the Drama.

Francis Wilson, the comedian, who is appearing in "The Mountain Climber," delivered an address to the graduates of the American Academy of Dramatic Art last week, in which he said, among other things:

"That profession must indeed be great which has all the world for its stage, all the men and women for its players, with all their multifarious acts and deeds for its plays. And this is our profession! When we think of it our hearts should grow big with pride, for the thought is worthy our noblest consideration.

"It is a deplorable fact that nowadays on the stage comparatively little attention is paid to right speaking. The actor is left almost entirely to his own knowledge of the subject. Absorbed in his wonderful stage illusions which recent discoveries and electrical devices enable him to produce, the modern stage manager is seemingly indifferent to the delicate demands of orthodoxy, the niceties of pronunciation and enunciation. There then is your golden opportunity, which you must seize to uphold the standard of cultured speech.

"You cannot do it, if like some thoughtless actors and actresses of the day, you accustom your ear and tongue to the flash language, the slang of the hour—outcroppings of the stable, the poolroom, and the prize ring.

"Leave the trappings of the theater in your dressing rooms and lay aside your affectations and attitudes with your paint. Have a just regard for your powers—that's human; but don't display it—that's vanity. Smother egotism in you and frown it down in your comrades. "You will understand what I mean when I say I hope none of you in private life will sink his self-respect sufficiently to resort to long, low, snoring, hating, boisterous manners, bleached looks, painted lips, and penciled eyes, and that loud laugh which betrays the vacant mind.

"That sort of thing is not art; it is a cheap, unworthy effort to attract attention, to advertise, and as I meet it on Broadway, I never see it but I want to cry out, 'Me and the sandwich man!'

"Act on the stage, not off.

"Be modest in bearing and speech. "Speak English, not 'Tenderloin.' "Be earnest in your acting.

"Be prudent with your earnings. The period of the average actor's earning power is brief.

"Know a great deal about your own profession and as much as you can about everything else.

"Don't accept success as too personal. Hamlets and Juliiets have come and gone, but the plays go on forever.

"Don't ascribe failure to bad luck. 'Luck,' as Lowell says, 'is the prerogative, the reward of valiant souls.'

"Be true to your art, and, above all, be true to yourselves."

The "Whistleable Song." (By Raymond Hubbell.)

The "whistleable song," as I understand it, is one which can and will be whistled by the street urchins, which will be sung and played on every piano until it becomes a bugaboo, and the author and composer stand in fear for their safety from the much-assailed public. The public wants something which it can carry in its memory without much trouble; the ordinary man can generally whistle anything in which the score is simple. Any one who can put the eight notes of the scale together in such a manner as to have a simple melody and an easy rhythm will have a "popular" song, as we know it to-day.

When I wrote "Just My Style," which became the most popular air in "Fantasia," I had no idea that it would become so well liked by the public. In fact, I had made up my mind that quite another air was to be the "song hit"—as the theatrical folk are wont to call it. But the public thought different, and "Just My Style" seemed to its liking. When I wrote the score for "Mexicans" I purposely wrote a number which I thought the public would like and would whistle. I was not disappointed this time, for "Supposing" was soon heard on the street corners, and even the hurdy-gurdy was grinding it out, much to the annoyance of every one.

I reiterate—I don't care or like to write the "popular" music, but since the public wants it I am ready to grind it out, despite my own personal feelings in the matter. Here is a verse from one of the songs in "A Knight for a Day."

You may talk about your Mozart, You may praise the classic few; You may cry over Mr. Wagner, You may stare with Verdi, too; But the people like to whistle, And they know what they're about, For the critics may be mad, But what you like most Is to whistle as you walk out.

In these lines are summed up my idea of the "popular song" situation to-day.

Charles Klein Versatile. Charles Klein is one of the few playwrights who have been equally successful in the writing of drama and of librettos. He furnished the book for De Wolf Hopper's great success, "El Capitán," and for Jefferson de Angelis he wrote "A Royal Rogue." Probably the only dramatist whose versatility is so complete is Stanislaus Stange, who has alternated successfully in the fields of comic opera and regular dramatic writing.

### PLAYS FOR THE FUTURE.

"Woman Against Woman," a domestic drama from the pen of Frank Harvey, will be the opening bill for the engagement of Kathryn Purnell and her company, which occurs at the Majestic Theater on April 8. A change of bill is announced for each week, and only plays classed among successes will be offered. Spell scenery and light effects will be a feature of the production to be given.

The dramatic organization of Princeton University, "The Triangle Club," which was so successful here last year in the musical play, "Tabasco Land," will give a single performance of a new play, "The Merry Monarch," at the Belasco Theater, on Monday evening, April 22. The performances of the Triangle Club are unique, in that the entire productions, including scenery and costumes, are the work of the undergraduates of Princeton, and all parts, both male and female, are played by young men who are students of the university.

At Chase's next week the eight polite vaudeville attractions will comprise Miss Emma Carus, the Broadway favorite, late star of "Woodland" and "Too Near Home;" Paul Spadoni, the Herculean gladiatorial juggler of the two extremes of the manipulative science; Pat Rooney and Marion Bent in "The Busy Bell Boy;" Collins and Hart; Ten Brooks, Lambert & Co.; Bertie Herron, the minstrel miss; Nettie Carroll, and "The Pollemania of Chase" comic motion pictures. The advance sale of reserved seats opens at the box office to-morrow.

Next week at the Belasco Theater, Louis Evan Shipman's successful play, "On Parole," will play a return engagement in this city, this time under the direction of Mr. Henry Miller, who some time ago added this play to his list of attractions. Practically the entire cast has been retained, including such well known favorites as Charlotte Walker, Vincent Serrano, Robert Cummings, Alethea Luce, Helen Graham, Fay Wheeler, Frederick Forrest, Fred E. Allen, and Francis X. Conlon. The play, as will be remembered, tells a story of our civil war, but from the Southern point of view.

Aside from her transcendent gift as an actress, Miss Netherole is very fond of literature, and a great number of her contributions have found place in the best publications of Europe and America. During her present tour, which will comprehend the important cities of the United States, ending in Boston late in May, Miss Netherole is keeping a minute record of daily occurrences. She travels in her own private car, "The Netherole," which she has fitted up into dining-room, parlor, bedroom, bathroom, and library. She carries a strict regime of services, including a private secretary. These personal impressions of Miss Netherole will be published in book form at the end of the season, and will be entitled "50,000 Miles with 'The Netherole.'" Miss Netherole and her company will be seen in this city in three weeks.

The stage of the Columbia Theater will be occupied for the week beginning Monday evening, April 8, with the musical comedy from the pen of George M. Cohan, entitled "Little Johnny Jones." It is the first play that brought the "Yankee Doodle Comedian" into prominence as an author, although he had written many plays prior to launching "Little Johnny Jones," and since the success of this piece he has added two more to the list—"Forty-five Minutes from Broadway" and "George Washington, Jr." This is the third year for "Little Johnny Jones," which has already made a fortune for Mr. Cohan. The same big cast of last year is still in evidence, including Tom Lewis, as "The Unknown;" Sam J. Ryan, as Timothy D. McKee; Bobby Barry, as "Little Johnny Jones," and the remainder of the original company, who so materially assisted in the success of the piece since its original presentation. The engagement at the Columbia Theater will include matinees on Thursday and Saturday.

"The Lion and the Mouse," probably the most talked of play in America to-day, will receive its first presentation in Washington at the New National Theater on Monday evening, April 8, under the direction of Henry H. Harris. The play unfolds a perfectly simple and direct, but powerful story, in which a girl pits herself against the most famous mouse magnate of the world. With her woman's wit as her only weapon, she enters the lists against a powerful coterie of moneyed men and corrupt politicians, who have brought dishonor upon her father, who, in his capacity of a supreme court judge, has rendered decisions inimical to the interests of capital. Mr. Klein offers a powerful study of the financial king of to-day, placing in direct contrast a fine type of American womanhood. The cast presenting the play here is the original one, which appeared for nineteen consecutive months at the Lyceum Theater, New York, and which includes such well known players as Edmund Breeze, Grace Elliott, Marguerite St. John, William Lewers, Marion Pollock Johnson, Frazer Coulter, Reginald Carrington, E. A. Eberle, Walter Allen, Gertrude Barrett, Charles Sturges, W. H. McDonald, and Julia Hanchett.

Two Green-room Stories. At one time Mr. Fiske, of Fiske and McDonough, who appear at Chase's this week, was a reporter on the New York Times. His writing was frequently praised, but as a hustler for news he received no bouquets. Toward the end of his first year, one bright June day, he went to the city editor, a particularly severe and unsympathetic man: "Mr. Blank," he said, "I have been working pretty hard, and feel that I need a vacation."

"You do?" "Yes, sir. Can I have one?" "You can."

"How long can I stay away?" "Two years."

Mr. Fiske left that afternoon, and although many years have elapsed, has not returned.

Miss Nellie McDonough is an accomplished musician. As a child she was noted quite a phenomenon, and at the age of ten she appeared before an audience of ten thousand people as a pianist at the Music Hall in Cincinnati, her native city, making a tremendous success. She has never forgotten her first love. All her spare time is given to her favorite instrument, and it is not unlikely that she will one day forsake the dramatic for the musical world.

While playing at the Pavilion, in London, she shared her dressing room with an English serio-comic, who was greatly interested in her American cousin. "What part of America do you come from?" said the Englishman. "New York," replied Miss McDonough. "Presume you know Hilda Smith?" "Can't say I do," answered Miss McDonough. "Is she an American?" "No, but she lives in America. Strange you haven't met her. She's a dear friend of mine."

"Come to think of it," exclaimed Miss McDonough, "I believe I have met a girl named Smith. What part of America did she live in?" "Brazil," replied her room-mate.

Dangerous Plays. Budding Dramatist—I have nearly finished a play which should prove the long looked for "great American play"—I want you to produce it. Manager—The last "great American play" I produced "nearly finished" me. Nothing doing.

### AMUSEMENTS.

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NEXT WEEK—EMMA CARUS, PAUL SPADONI, ROBERT CUMMINGS, ALETHEA LUCE, HENRY HARRIS, COLLINS AND HART, TEN BROOKS, LAMBERT & CO., BERTIE HERRON, NETTIE CARROLL, AND "THE POLLEMANIA OF CHASE" COMIC MOTION PICTURES. SEATS TO-MORROW.

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